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--CLAIM OF BENEFIT TO PRIOR APPLICATIONS

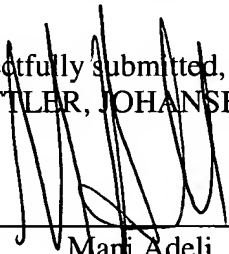
This patent application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application entitled "Method and Apparatus for Considering Diagonal Wiring in Placement," having serial number 09/731,891, and filed 12/6/2000; and is also a continuation-in-part of "Recursive Partitioning Placement Method and Apparatus," having the serial number 09/732,181, and filed on 12/6/00. This patent application is also a continuation-in-part application of U.S. Patent Application 10/013,816, filed 10/19/01.--

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment amends the claim of benefit to include a claim of priority to earlier filed U.S. Application 10/013,816, filed 10/19/01.

Respectfully submitted,
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